

Seaside ponders transition of 'old church building'

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group



Katherine Lacaze/EO Media Group

This former Lutheran church, acquired by the city in September 2014, will be the subject of discussion Wednesday.

A space with potential

Committee members envision the space as a potential wedding hall, reunion center or performing arts room.

Darren Gooch of the park and recreation district said the former church could be "an extension" to the Bob Chisholm Community Center, which is currently used for public events.

Kristin Tschannen, a local business owner and member of Clatsop County's Way to Wellville Strategic Advisory

Council, said it might be best to look at existing gaps when it comes to city facilities. "What are the needs we're not fulfilling?" she said.

Identifying needs

Identifying those needs would be a good start to deciding where the old church building fits in, she said. One idea, Tschannen said, would be to "keep it almost like a blank canvas" that could be used for many events and purposes, perhaps an art gal-

lery, after-school youth center, theater space or lecture hall.

Assistant Seaside Library Director Jon Burke asked if there was a budget for the project.

Not yet, Larson said. A few maintenance projects will need to be done on the building, such as reconstructing the wheelchair ramp outside to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, installing a new heating system, bathroom renova-



Katherine Lacaze/EO Media Group

A Seaside committee discussed the future of a former church building acquired by the city in September 2014.

tions and new flooring. Other projects, such as removing pews in the main hall, depend on the building's future use. Burke estimated there was at least \$50,000 worth of work to make the building suitable for any purpose.

Once the building's future

is decided, then the city will determine how to manage and maintain the building. Committee members will return to the library at noon Wednesday to consider input they have received from local community groups and the public.

Port sets workshop on Riverwalk Inn muddle

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

The Port of Astoria Commission will hold a workshop on the Astoria Riverwalk Inn Tuesday, as they appear headed toward a short-term agreement before an open bidding process to take over the hotel.

The meeting starts with the workshop and heads to discussions of Port Commission reimbursement procedure, governance and board rules.

A final discussion covers filling employee vacancies. Jim Knight, the Port's executive director, was questioned last Tuesday over the Port's effort to hire six employees, from maintenance staff to a property manager.

Commissioner Bill Hunsinger said he didn't know whether Knight could just hire the employees; Knight said they had been approved in a budget; and Andrew Bomstein, co-owner of Bomstein Seafoods, chastised the Port Commission over its micromanagement of staff, which he credited for a high turnover in directors over the past several years.

Red Building

The Port Commission will take action on the lease for the Red Building. Dale Lommasson, a contractor from Troutdale, came forward and said he is purchasing the building for \$1.7 million from Union Fish

Properties, run by Mark Cary and Shawn Helligso.

In 2004, partners Ryan Davis and Helligso, working under Union Fish Properties, bought the Red Building, the last structure from the Union Fishermen's Cooperative Packing Co., from the Port of Astoria for \$120,000. They planned to spend \$1.7 million fixing it up.

The building includes offices, Bridgewater Bistro and event rental space upstairs. Lommasson said he plans to keep the same businesses.

Lommasson wants to either buy the property or have a perpetual lease as long as he is not in default. Past Port Commissions have set rules against selling property, although some commissioners seemed open to hearing an offer.

FEMA challenge

The Port Commission will likely agree to help pay for further review of flood map data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The agreement has been signed so far by Warrenton, Astoria and Clatsop County.

The Port and those agencies will share equally in \$27,200 of expenses to correct FEMA's data and draw more accurate maps. Diking District No. 9, located along Youngs River, will contribute \$500.

The Port Commission will also take action on a bid involving the Pier 2 warehouse, which houses several fish processors.

Cutter Alert returns with fishing vessel in tow



Photo courtesy of Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicole Picklo

Chief petty officers Brian Schneider and James Koon, both boatswain's mates aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Alert, instruct crew members and guests on the proper donning of immersion suits Aug. 22.

The Daily Astorian

The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Alert returned to Astoria last week after a three-month patrol stretching from Mexico to Canada.

In a release upon the Alert's return, the Coast Guard detailed the vessel's counter-narcotic and living marine resources patrols off of Southern California.

The Alert trained with the Mexican Armada in Ensenada, Mexico, on joint damage control and law enforcement,

along with an evening dinner onboard the Alert.

During their final weeks of deployment, the crew of the Alert tested their response to damage control, medical response, information warfare, and engineering casualties during the Tailored Ship's Training Availability, a training event near Seattle and Everett, Wash.

On the way back to Astoria, the Alert invited family members and friends on a "Tiger Cruise." The U.S. Navy tradition allows friends and family to ride along



Photo courtesy of Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicole Picklo

The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Alert tows the fishing vessel Discovery Aug. 23.

for a day or two and see what happens during a deployment.

Family and friends got an especially close look at Coast Guard operations when the Alert diverted to tow a disabled fish-

ing vessel back to Astoria. The Alert arrived 15 hours later than scheduled in Astoria, where a motor lifeboat from Station Cape Disappointment took on the fishing vessel.

Warming center raises funds for shower and laundry facilities

The Daily Astorian

The Astoria Warming Center is fundraising in preparation for reopening in November, and organizers have made it their goal to provide a shower and laundry facilities for homeless guests.

The warming center, which was temporarily housed last winter at the Astoria Senior Center, will be operating in the First United Methodist Church

for the next three years.

The estimated cost for installing a shower room, on-demand water heater, laundry hook-ups, and lighting is about \$15,000. Washers and dryers, general contractor services, and much of the labor is being donated, but funds are still needed for plumbing fixtures, lighted exit signs, a water heater, and upgrades to the plumbing and electrical systems.

This winter the center will be open from Nov. 15 through March 15, and has enough funds to pay basic costs of running the center, but has an urgent need for additional funds to improve services to the homeless.

Grace Episcopal Church has agreed to continue receiving funds for the warming center, so contributions will be tax-deductible. Checks can be made out to Grace Episcopal Church,

designated for Jubilee Ministries/Warming Center, and mailed to 1545 Franklin Ave., Astoria, OR 97103. Those interested can also visit the church's website and donate online through their PayPal account at www.graceastoria.org

Additional volunteers will also be needed as winter approaches. For information, call Drew Herzig at 503-325-1895, or email drewherzig@gmail.com



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